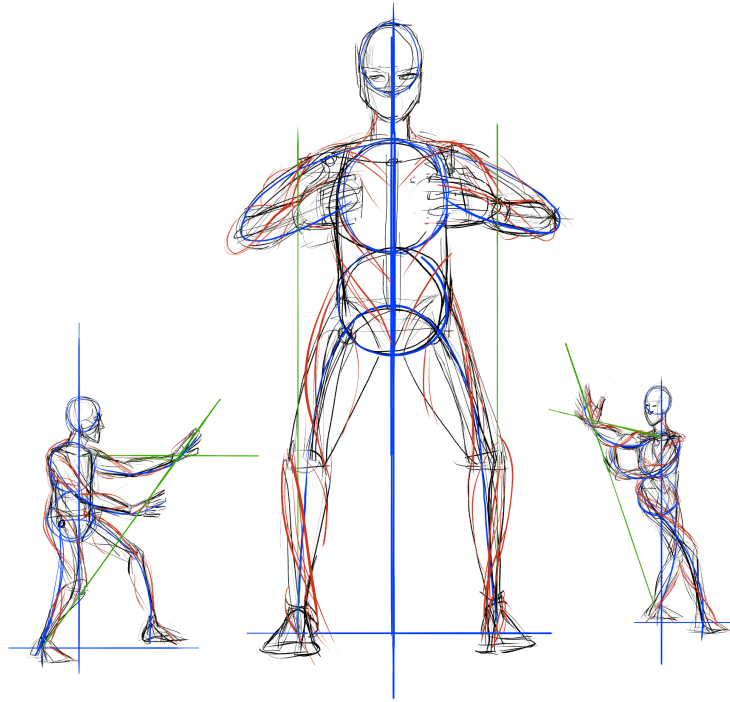


# Syllabus

# Learning How to Learn Martial Arts

## Traditional Martial Arts as Fighting Fundamentals



## Learning Martial Architecture

### Foundations for Martial Arts Practices

### Purpose

The benefits of martial arts training are not just in fighting skill; it can improve body awareness, balance and stability, aid in injury prevention and recovery, and provide grounded focus for everyday life challenges.

But some of the most potent of these benefits, those granted by a thorough understanding, development, and testing of the fundamentals, are not always widely explored or understood - even among some traditional martial artists.

The purpose of this class is to give students an understanding of the physical and mental elements underlying all martial arts, as well as how to use this understanding to assess, interpret and improve their movement and develop their fundamental martial qualities. Students will not only develop greater familiarity with these fundamentals through hands-on experience in classes, but take home concepts and methods that they can apply to their own personal practices.

# Instructor: Michael Weston

Over the past 20 years, I've studied several types of traditional Chinese martial arts; I mainly practice Baguazhang, Taijiquan, and Xingyiquan, with a focus on applying internal development to external applications.

Over the past 7 years, I have taught a range of students traditional martial arts concepts as well as self-defense technique and strategy, including as an instructor for PopGym and Dragon Combat Club.

## Logistics

### LOCATION:

Herbert Von King Park, by the amphitheater

### SUPPLIES:

Comfortable athletic clothing, water (optional: protective gear and boxing or MMA gloves)

### COST:

\$100 for 4 classes, \$30 single class drop-in  
(sliding scale available, email me)

**SIGN UP:** [Here](#)

### SCHEDULING:

The classes will happen in rounds of 4 sessions; while it's not the end of the world to miss one, they will cover connected ideas and you'll get the most out of all of them together.

#### Round 1:

Foundations Focus	
Grappling Focus	
Striking Focus	
Laboratory Focus	

#### Round 2:

Foundations Focus	
Grappling Focus	
Striking Focus	

Laboratory Focus	
------------------	--

### Round 3:

Foundations Focus	
Grappling Focus	
Striking Focus	
Laboratory Focus	

## Syllabus

Every session will have a Focus, a lens through which we examine different basic principles. They will cycle between four stages:

- a Concepts portion to introduce, clarify, and refine ideas,
- a Skills portion to build mechanical familiarity with those Concepts,
- a Forms portion to relate those Skills to traditional martial arts practice, and
- a Drills/Games portion to practice those skills with your classmates.

Discussion is encouraged throughout, as this is meant to be an organic learning environment that both conveys fundamental combative principles and explores common ideas and questions around traditional learning.

While this class involves mostly physical contact, as it is the only way to develop some of these skills, sensitivities to contact are respected. Alternative options are available for practices that still build some of the target conditioning and techniques.

Below is an example of content for different class focuses:

### Focus 1 - Foundations

Whatever we learn is built upon the basics; once you learn them, a piece of your practice will always be continuing to refine and perfect them. Lesson 1 is about key points underpinning martial arts around the world, physically, mentally and philosophically.

Concepts:	What is a "Martial Art," Anyway? Martial Virtues: Respect, Discipline, Integrity Skill acquisition and retention Structure, Weight, and Leverage
Skills:	Breakfalls

	Basic Stance Concept Basic Power Chain
Forms:	Standing Meditation Taijiquan, Baguazhang, Xingyiquan: Form openings and interpretations
Drills/Games:	Push-Fall Boulder Pushing Balanced Pull Turning the Wheel Push Hands - Fixed Step

## Focus 2 - Grappling

One of the two main categories of fighting, Grappling is the manipulation of an opponent's structure and balance while protecting control of your own. Building on the foundations we set up in the previous lesson, we'll here examine the anatomical and range considerations that apply across grappling types, from Wrestling to Judo to Sumo.

Concepts:	Qualities of Martial Ability: Conditioning, Technique, Composure Organization of ideas as a key difference between Martial Arts The Martial Chain: Nature, Principles, Strategies, Techniques Lines, Curves, and Coils
Skills:	The Grappling Chain: Hands-Elbows-Shoulders-Torso-Hips-Legs Intro to Throw Mechanics
Forms:	Taijiquan: Empty-Full Stepping Grasp Sparrow's Tail
Drills/Games:	Grip-Breaks Forearm Controls Underhooks/Overhooks Position Problem-Solving Push Hands - Moving Step

## Focus 3 - Striking

Striking is the practice of using concentrated impact force to disrupt your opponent's ability to aggress, while protecting yourself from their force. While there are many ways to do this, they can be categorized into a few main sections which will help you recognize key functions and mechanics in many different arts.

Concepts:	Forms, Drills, Games and Frames of Mind “Internal” vs. “External” Martial Arts “Beats” in Martial Arts: Keeping Time with the Hips Three Engaging Maneuvers: Hold, Circle, Advance
Skills:	Striking mechanics: Three Strikes - Thrust, Hook, Cut Three Defenses - Stop, Parry, Void Three Maneuvers - Hold, Circle, Advance
Forms:	Xingyiquan: Ploughing Step Single Movements: Metal, Water, Fire
Drills/Games:	Distance-Keeping Three Strikes/ Three Defenses Drills Attack/Defense Problem Solving Shoulder Tag

#### Focus 4 - Laboratory

This is the exploration of taking what we’ve learned and exploring how to use it - not just as practical combative skill but also as a “lens” to view traditional practices through. We’ll examine some traditional forms, break them down, and develop the factors that could help determine and assess their function.

Concepts:	Martial Arts “vs.” Combat Sports vs. “Self Defense” What “Works” and Why? Finding Where it Fits Ways to Read Forms
Skills:	3 Power Methods - Whipping, Rolling, Driving 3 Core Skills: Rooting, Following, Coiling
Forms:	Baguazhang: Circle Walking Pushing Millstone Posture Single Palm Change
Drills/Games:	Contact Flow Light Sparring